

LIVING ORTHODOXY



ST. INNOCENT OF MOSCOW, APOSTLE OF KAMCHATKA AND ALASKA: A CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNT

Also in this issue...

The Czestochowa Icon of the Theotokos: History and Akathist Hymn
St. Philaret of New York: Sermons on the Annunciation and on Humility
The Scriptural Basis of the Orthodox Faith
St. Theophan the Recluse: On Fasting
Book Review: The Ark of Salvation

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LIVING ORTHODOXY

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ON FEAR

There are persons who, while they fear temporal adversities, expose themselves to the severity of everlasting visitation. Concerning whom it is rightly declared by the Psalmist: "There have they feared with fear where there is no fear" [Ps 13:6]. For one man already longs to defend the truth with freedom, yet being fearful in that very longing that he feels, he shrinks from the indignation of a human power, and while on earth he fears man in opposition to the truth, he under- goes from heaven the wrath of Truth. Another, conscious of his sins, is already desirous to bestow upon the needy the things which he is possessed of, yet dreads lest he himself come to need them which were so bestowed. When, being alarmed, he provides with reservation for his own use succors of the flesh for the future, he starves the soul from the sustenance of mercy, and when he fears want on earth he cuts off from himself the eternal plenitude of heavenly cheer. So it is said: "Over those who fear the frost, the snow rushes down" [Job 6:16]. In that all who apprehend from below what ought to be trodden under the feet, undergo from above what is deserving of apprehension. And when they will not pass by what they might have trodden beneath them, they meet with a judgment from heaven which they can in no sort sustain.

— St. Gregory the Great
† 603 AD

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ST. INNOCENT OF MOSCOW APOSTLE OF KAMCHATKA AND ALASKA

The Rev. Charles R. Hale, Dean of Davenport

A large part of what now makes up the Russian Empire was, when it became such, inhabited by Muslims and heathen. Yet everywhere the Gospel is, and has long been, preached, and God's blessing has manifestly followed the proclamation of His word. Says Mouravieff, in *Question religieuse...*, "The loving principles of the extension of Christianity are at work here. The Russian Church, as dominant throughout a great empire, gradually diffuses the light of Christ's Gospel within her own borders. Her more immediate duty is to labor for the conversion of the heathen, Jews, Muslims and schismatics who belong to her, scattered over the one-ninth part of the habitable globe. In those dioceses where there are heathen or Muslims, the languages spoken therein are taught in the theological seminaries so that, not only those specially devoted to the work, but the parish clergy also, may be enabled to work as missionaries.

Russia has sowed the seeds of Christianity over a vast field, ever establishing new parishes, which most naturally become also mission stations. In this mode of working there is little to excite attention, or to create talk. When and how have so many of our heathen become Christians? It is not everyone who knows. But multitudes of these are now enjoying the blessings of Christianity and civilization. There is yet, however, much to be done for the conversion and establishment in the Faith of many tribes, who are more or less in darkness, and the Church still labors for and with them."

But the missions of the Russian Church are not *confined* to the heathen or false believers within her own borders. For many years she has had a mission at Pekin (Beijing), and the most successful mission work in Japan would seem to be that carried out by her.

If information in regard to Russian missionary work is not forced upon the attention, it is nevertheless not unobtainable for those who seek for it. The literature of Russian missions is not a small one. A number of such sources (but only a small part of the actual material bearing on the subject),

to which reference is made herein, are listed at the end. A hasty glance at them reveals that they are filled not so much with talk *about* missions as with records of faithful missionary work. In the first, Mouravieff gives a *Compte rendu d'une mission Russe dans les Monts Altai*. This paper, one of those translated by Neale in *Voices of the East* [London, Joseph Masters, 1859] under the title *The Mission of the Altai*, describes a most effective work, begun in 1830 and still carried on, amongst wild nomads in the southern part of Siberia.

In the *Remembrancer of the Labors of Orthodox Russian Evangelizers*," Alexander S. Stourdza, a pious layman, began to give a record of missionary work done by the Russian Church between 1793 and 1853. Mr. Stourdza died in 1854, leaving his work far from complete. The fine octavo volume before us was all that he was enabled to finish. In it, he tells of the conversion of two tribes of the Caucasus, about the year 1820. Then he gives the journal of Archimandrite Benjamin, an earnest missionary among the Samoyedea of northern Russia, describing their conversion between the years 1825 and 1830. There follow extracts from the journals of other missionaries, two of these being Archimandrite Macarius, founder of the Mission of the Altai, and Archpriest Landyscheff, who succeeded him in his charge. Following this, he describes the establishment of the Orthodox Church in Russian America, with a selection of letters from the author of that account, Innocent, Archbishop of Kamchatka, to Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow [both since glorified], whom St. Innocent has now succeeded. The remainder of the work tells of missionary labors in the Aleutian Islands and in northwestern and central Siberia.

Other publications give more recent missionary intelligence and tell of the present condition of missionary work. From such a mass of interesting material it is difficult to make a selection. But in setting forth the story of that great missionary hero St. Innocent, now Metropolitan of Moscow but for many years Archbishop of Kamchatka, I think the

subject will be one of more than ordinary interest to American churchmen.

As Mr. Stourdza believed he could best make his great work of value if “instead of an artificial narrative, he set before his readers the doings of Russian evangelists, as told at different times and, for most part, in the letters of the missionaries themselves, without embellishment or eulogies,” so is it my aim here to present in summary form a translation of authentic documents, with the needful connecting and explanatory remarks, rather than to tell the story myself.

“Who in the West,” asks Mouravieff, “hears anything of the truly apostolic labors of the Archbishop of Kamchatka, who is ever sailing over the ocean, or driving in reindeer sledges over his vast but thinly settled diocese, thousands of miles in extent, everywhere baptizing the natives, for whom he has introduced the use of letters, and translated the Gospel into the tongues of the Aleuts?” Few indeed have heard, but doubtless there are many who would be glad to hear. [A. N. Mouravieff was an eminent Russian layman, author of the well-known *History of the Russian Church* translated by Blackmore, and of other important works. He was for some years Vice-procurator of the Holy Synod.]

The present Metropolitan of Moscow, John Veniaminoff, was born 1 September 1797 (o.s.), educated in the seminary of Irkutsk from which he graduated in 1817, and entered upon the sacred ministry in May of that year. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1821. He was consecrated to the episcopate, having taken the name Innocent, 15 December 1840, by the episcopal members of the Holy Synod, in the Kazan Cathedral at St. Petersburg, for the newly-founded Diocese of Kamchatka. In 1850 his see was made archiepiscopal. Early in 1868 he succeeded the honored St. Philaret as Metropolitan of Moscow.

Of the first two years after his ordination to the priesthood, in which he seemed to have been engaged in parish work in the Diocese of Irkutsk, we have no record. But in 1823 he offered himself as a missionary and was sent by his bishop to

Ounalaska. Let us preface the story of his labors there, as he himself does, by a brief account of earlier work in the same region. In doing this we translate from his own words, but for lack of space greatly abbreviating his narrative. [*The Founding of the Orthodox Church in Russian America* by Archpriest Veniaminoff, was published in St. Petersburg in 1840, and reprinted in Stourdza’s *Remembrancer*..., pp. 200-242.]

How attractive his exordium: “Knowing how pleasant it is for the true Christian to hear of the propagation of Christianity among nations previously unenlighted by the Holy Gospel, I have determined to set forth what I know concerning the propagation and establishment of Christian Truth in one of the most remote parts of our country where, by the will of God, I have been led to spend many years.”

He goes on to show how “the Christian religion crossed to the shores of Russian America with the first Russians who went to establish themselves in those parts. Among those who sought to establish a new industry for Russia and to acquire gain for themselves, there were those who were resolved, at the same time, upon the establishment of Christianity amongst the savages with whom they dwelt. The Cossack Andrean Tolstich, discovering about 1743 the island which came to be known as Andreanoffsky, was probably the first to baptize the natives. In 1759 Ivan Glotoff, discovering the island of Lisa, baptized the son of one of the hereditary chiefs of the Lisevian Aleuts. He afterwards took the young man to Kamchatka, where this first-fruit of the Ounalaska Church spent several years. He studied the Russian language and literature and then, returning to his native country with the position of chief *toen* (governor) conferred upon him by the Governor of Kamchatka, greatly helped by his example in the propagation of Christianity.

The good missionary confesses that self-interest had something to do with the desire on the part of many of the first settlers for the spread of Christianity amongst the savages, thinking that they would thus be able to establish better relations with the natives. When we think of the ways in which Americans and English have too often acted

toward the savage tribes with whom they have been brought into contact, instead of blaming the defective motive on the part of some, we may rejoice that in this instance "the desire of the Russians for gain served as a means for diffusing the first principles of Christianity among the Aleuts, and aided the labors of the missionaries who came after."

Mr. Shelikoff, founder of the Russian-American company, "among his many plans and projects for the advancement of the interests of the American part of our territory, had in view especially the propagation of Christianity and the founding of churches. On this account, on his return from Kodiak in the year 1787, he laid a memorial in regard to this before the government and begged it to found an Orthodox Mission, of which he and his associate Golikoff took upon themselves the expense both of establishment and sustaining. As a result of his intercessions, a mission of eight monks was founded at St. Petersburg for the preaching of the Word of God among people brought under Russian dominion. Well provided for by Shelikoff, Golikoff, and other benefactors, the mission set out from St. Petersburg in 1792, and arrived at Kodiak the following autumn."

At once they entered upon their work, beginning on Kodiak Island. In 1795 Fr. Macarius went to the Ounalaska district on a missionary tour, and Fr. Juvenal visited the Tchougachas and crossed over the Gulf of Kenai, both being everywhere warmly received by the natives. The year after, Fr. Juvenal, in the neighborhood of the lake of Pliamna, or Shelikoff, "finished his apostolic labors with his life, serving the Church better than any of his associates." Many years later, the circumstances of his martyrdom were related by the natives. Some other members of the mission gave special attention to the education of the children. One of them, Fr. Herman, founded an orphan asylum, of which he remained in charge until his death in 1837.

Shelikoff realized the importance of having the work properly organized, and so he was not content with such a mission as was sent out. "He urged the founding of a bishopric in Russian America, under the charge of its own bishop. He fixed upon Kodiak as the proper residence of a bishop, estimating the population of that island at about fifty thousand.

In consequence of his entreaties, and in consideration of the number of inhabitants," an episcopal see was founded and Fr. Joseph, archimandrite of the Mission, was summoned to Irkutsk and there consecrated in March 1799, by the Bishop of Irkutsk, to be the first bishop of "Kodiak, Kamchatka and America." The new bishop, as he returned homeward, was lost at sea in the ship Phoenix, with all who accompanied him, including the priest Macarius and the deacon Stephen, who had come with him from St. Petersburg when the Mission was founded.

Soon after this, Shelikoff died, and all thought of extending the Mission and of setting up a bishopric seemed lost sight of for years. In the whole colony there was but one missionary priest, until in 1816, in response to the entreaties of Governor Baranoff, Michael Sokoloff was sent to Sitka.

A related fact, not widely known, may be mentioned here: A Russian settlement in California under the auspices of Baranoff was made on the coast, about forty miles northwest of San Francisco [present-day Fort Ross, California]. A number of Indians there became members of the Orthodox Church and, when the colony was removed to Sitka, went north with it. Of those Indian converts or their descendants there were in 1838 still thirty-six living at Sitka. In 1821 new privileges were granted to and new regulations made for the Russian-American Company, and the duty was laid upon it of maintaining a sufficient number of priests for the colony. Accordingly, three were obtained from Irkutsk — in 1823 Fr. John Veniaminoff for Ounalaska; in 1824 Fr. Frumentius Mordavsky for Kodiak; and in 1825 Fr. Jacob Netchvatoff for Atchka.

Fr. Veniaminoff entered upon his work with enthusiasm and hearty liking for those amongst whom he was to labor. He recounts how Fr. Macarius and others who had preached the Gospel amongst them "did not present to them with fire and sword the new Faith, which forbade them things in which they delighted (*e.g.*, drunkenness and polygamy), but notwithstanding this the Aleuts received it readily and quickly. Fr. Juvenal

remained in the Ounalaska district but one year, voyaging to distant islands and traveling from place to place with only one Russian attendant. The Aleuts whom he had baptized, or whom he was preparing for holy baptism, conveyed him from place to place, sustained him and guarded him without any recompense or payment. Such examples are rare.”

“Although the Aleuts willingly embraced the Christian religion and prayed to God as they were taught, it must be confessed that, until a priest was settled amongst them, they worshipped One Who was almost an unknown God. For Fr. Macarius, from the shortness of time that he was with them, and from the lack of competent interpreters, was able to give them but very general ideas about religion, such as God’s omnipotence, His goodness, etc. Nevertheless, the Aleuts remained Christian, and after baptism completely renounced shamanism. They not only destroyed all the masks which they had used in their heathen worship, but also allowed the songs which might in any way remind them of their former belief to fall into oblivion — so that when, on my arrival amongst them, I out of curiosity made inquiry about these songs, but could not hear of one. As to superstitions, from which few men well taught in Gospel Truth are quite free, many which they had they quite gave up, and others had lost their power over them. But of all the good qualities of the Aleuts, nothing so pleased and delighted my heart as their desire or, to speak more justly their *thirst*, for the Word of God, such that sooner would an indefatigable missionary tire in preaching than they in hearing the Word.”

But Fr. John’s missionary service was not only with the peaceful Aleuts. There was a fierce tribe, the Koloshes who, to use his words when he first met with them in 1804, “like fierce wild beasts hunted the Russians to tear them in pieces, so that they had to shut themselves up in their fortresses or go out in companies.” And even in 1819 they still looked on “Russians as their enemies, and slew such as they could take by night, in revenge for the deaths of their ancestors slain in contests with them.”

To these he resolved to carry the Gospel. To this end he came to Sitka, in the neighborhood of which lived the Koloshes, towards the close of

1834. That winter and the ensuing spring imperative duties detained him among the Aleuts at Sitka. When summer came he found that the Koloshes had left their settlements and were scattered in different parts for the purpose of fishing. Fr. John confesses, too, that he shrank from meeting these hostile savages. Ashamed of himself for what he felt to be cowardice, he resolved that immediately upon the close of the Nativity holidays he would take his life in his hands and go.

“Let no one wonder,” he goes on to say, “at the decrees of Providence. Four days before I came to the Koloshes, smallpox suddenly broke out amongst them, and first of all at the very place where I had expected to make my first visit. Had I begun my instruction of the Koloshes before the appearance of the smallpox, they would certainly have blamed me for all the evil which came upon them, as if I were a Russian shaman or sorcerer who sent such a plague amongst them. The results of such an inopportune arrival would have been dreadful. Their hatred towards the Russians, which was beginning to wane, would have become as strong as ever. They would perhaps have killed me, as the supposed author of their woes. But this would have been as nothing in comparison with the fact that my coming to the Koloshes just before the smallpox would probably have caused the way to be stopped for a half century to missionaries of God’s Word, who would have always seemed to them harbingers of disaster and death.

“But, glory be to God Who orders all things for good! The Koloshes were not now what they had been two years previously (when he had meant to come among them). If they did not immediately become Christians, they at least listened, or began to listen, to the words of salvation. Few were baptized then for, while I proclaimed the Truth to them, I never urged upon them or wished to urge upon them the immediate reception of holy baptism; rather, seeking to convince their judgment, I awaited a request from them. Those who expressed a desire to be baptized I received with full satisfaction. I always received consent from the *toens* (chiefs) and from the mothers of those desiring to be baptized. which was never denied, and this greatly pleased them.”

Fr. John introduced inoculation amongst the Koloshes and the good they saw coming from this “greatly changed their opinion of the Russians and of their shamans (magicians). They neither forbade nor did anything to hinder the reception of holy baptism by those desiring it. Instead of despising or avoiding those baptized, they looked on them as persons wiser than themselves, and almost as Europeans.”

After sixteen years of missionary toil, Fr. John was sent to St. Petersburg to plead for help for the Mission. Tsar Nicholas proposed to the Holy Synod to send one who had proved so faithful a priest back to the scene of his labors as a bishop, for episcopal supervision was manifestly greatly needed. “Your Majesty must consider,” suggested some members of the Synod, “that though he is no doubt an excellent man, he has no cathedral, no body of clergy, and no episcopal residence.” “The more then, like an apostle,” replied the Tsar, “cannot he be consecrated?”

As has already been stated, the good missionary was consecrated on 15 December 1840 (o.s.) in St. Petersburg, with the name Innocent, as Bishop of Kamchatka. He was consecrated for a great work he was as prompt to set about as he was earnest in his labor.

Stourdzia’s *Remembrancer* contains a number of letters from St. Innocent to St. Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow. Mouravieff well says of these that, “describing apostolic labors carried on for so many years for the conversion of savages in northeastern Siberia and in Russian America, they would furnish a series of *Lettres édifiantes* as interesting as any of those in which the Jesuits so delight.”

We have space here to give translations of but a few extracts from these. The first of the series tells of his arrival in America as bishop, and of the beginning of his work there.

April 30, 1842

At last, thank the Lord God, in America! I must now tell you of my voyage, my arrival, *etc.*

On the 20th of August 1841 we sailed from the mouth of the Ochot River, in the brig Ochotsk, under most favorable circumstances, and directed

our course towards one of the Kurile islands named Simounair, which we reached on 21 September. On the evening of that day we left the island and sailed for Sitka. For about twenty days the winds were favorable, the weather clear and warm, so that day we were but 500 miles from Sitka, about 4,000 from Ochotsk. The weather was so pleasant that we held services every holy day, not in the cabin as is usually the case, but on deck.

September 25th, St. Sergius’ day, about 4pm, but at Moscow about 4am, we sighted Mt. Edgecumbe, near New Archangel. The next day, September 26th, the day on which we commemorate the death of the Beloved Disciple of Christ, a day on which the Church prays that the darkness which has so long covered the heathen may be dispersed, we entered the harbor of Sitka and dropped anchor about 4am. Saturday September 27th I went ashore, where I was received by all the chief authorities, the officials and the entire body of the Orthodox, amongst whom were some baptized Kolashes standing by themselves. In a partly official dress I went to the Church, where I delivered a short address to my new flock and offered up a prayer of thanksgiving to our Lord God. September 28th I celebrated the Divine Liturgy.

The church at New Archangel, which is growing old and will have to be rebuilt in four or five years, I found otherwise in fair condition and handsomely ornamented, as if they really expected a bishop to come. All this is to be ascribed to the zeal of the principal warden, Etolin, who from the time of his coming to the colony has been earnest to have the church in good order. Our doings since we came to Sitka have not yet been very important.

1st: A mission has been sent to Noushtan which will reach its destination not sooner than the middle of next June. The priest in charge is full of hope, though he is not one of the most learned of men. We have furnished him with full instructions and with everything we could provide.

2nd: December 17th, a sort of theological school was opened, counting now 23 persons, Creoles and natives. The monk M, a student of the Moscow Spiritual Academy, has it in charge.

3rd: The theological student J. T. was sent to Kodiak to learn the language and in four months has had wonderful success. He is a person of decided ability.

4th: The monk M has been preaching to the Koloshes, and not without success. I hardly dare say how great the success may be. He has about 80 candidates for holy baptism and asks it for them, but I do not care to be over hasty with them. The more and the better they are taught, the more they can be depended on.

5th: I went this spring to Kodiak to look into the affairs of the Church there and was comforted beyond my expectations. The report of my arrival in America, the zeal and piety of their priest and the Christian coöperation of the governor, Kostromitinoff, have all been most useful to the Kodiaks. Poor things, until now they had heard little of what is good and, as they said, they now begin to go from darkness to light. Previously, perhaps scarcely one hundred of them came to church, even irregularly, and they knew scarce anything of devotion. Now the church is full every holy day, and Lent was kept by more than four hundred of them, some coming from distant places. The iniquity of cohabiting in unblessed marriages, formerly common, is now at an end. Things had fallen into such a neglected state that of the 3,700 souls reported in the census of 1841 there were more than 1,000 unbaptized. There are now about 100 children unbaptized between the ages of two and nine. And how many such died, especially at the time of the smallpox, which took the lives of over 2,000!

The next letter from which we quote shows St. Innocent's care for the young.

April 5, 1844

On the eleventh of January I began to assemble about me in my chapel all the children, both boys and girls, who do not belong to the schools, and to

teach them the law of God. The children here (at Sitka) between the ages of one and eighteen are very numerous. In the theological school, in the Company's school, and in two girls' schools, there are about one hundred and forty scholars — and yet I gathered about one hundred and fifty others. The girls I taught on Tuesday, the boys on Wednesday.

About two years ago, in all our American churches, and also in the cathedral of Kamchatka, the priests in charge of the churches assembled the children of both sexes in church once or twice a week and taught them the law of God and their duties in general. And I am happy to say that this year, if the priests in *all* the churches of the diocese have not kept up that custom, at least the greater part of them are diligent in this part of their work.

At this time the children receiving instruction in the churches throughout the diocese must number about four hundred, besides the scholars in the schools, who would swell the number to more than six hundred, or the thirty-fifth part of all the inhabitants....

The Koloshes, our neighbors, thank God, continue to come to holy baptism. In Pascha week thirty-five of them were baptized, at their own request and at no one's persuasion. In the Lent just past those already baptized, who all lived near the fort, were very particular in keeping the fast, and that without any special suggestion on my part — indeed they were not a whit behind the Russians in their observance.

June 1845

The word of truth begins to extend more and more in the northern coasts of America. The priest Golovin was in those parts last year, 1844, and during his stay there had an opportunity of seeing, in their settlements, almost all of those he had baptized on the occasion of his first visit the previous year. Thank God, if not all, yet a good part of them remembered and tried to fulfill the promises made at their baptism, and some of those most penetrated by the Word of Truth have tried to bear testimony of Christianity to their heathen friends, and have persuaded many of them to be baptized. The Kvichpak church in September 1844 num-

bered more than two hundred and seventy natives and thirty foreigners, whilst in 1843 there were of the Christians there thirty foreigners and four natives, the same of whom the Holy Synod informed me when I was in St. Petersburg. One of these especially very heartily coöperated with the priest. The natives expressed with one mouth a desire to have a priest living amongst them, so it remained only for me the founding of an independent mission there and, thank God, the mission is already organized and has gone there this year. The priest Jacob Netchvatoff is in charge of this mission, the same whom I wished to send to the Kenai mission and who was reported as belonging to it; but as the work in the north was more important, I sent him to the Kvichpak mission. To the Kenai mission I sent the monk Nicholas, a deacon, who has gone there this year.

This year, 1845, after leaving Petropaulovsky, where I arrived June second by the mercy of God, I expect to visit the Aleutian Islands and, next summer, to take a sea voyage to Kamchatka.

May 1, 1848

From reports I received last September from Kenai and Kvichpak missionaries, it is clear that the Lord does not cease to bless their labors with visible success. The missionaries, too, labor with all zeal and judgment, not striving to unduly increase the number of the baptized; on the contrary, they exercise great circumspection in receiving those who come to them desirous of holy baptism. The Kenai in general receive Christianity with gladness and in a spirit of obedience to God's law. They listen to instruction with untiring attention, fulfill their Christian duties heartily and with all care and, what is very noteworthy, on a single expression of the missionary's wish, they give up their national dances and songs, replacing the latter with our hymns, so far as they are translated into their language.

All their former shamans have been baptized, and the greater part of them show themselves to be very good Christians. Some of them, on a very slight hint from the missionary, cut off their hair (which previously they had highly prized), in token that they not only followed, but were glad to fulfill,

their missionary's teachings.

The Word of God sown by the missionaries on the border of the ocean has been conveyed without any direct instrumentality on their part, by those converted from heathenism, to a people living at the extreme north part of the continent of America, called Koltchans, who had never seen a missionary.

The Kenai missionary writes that in the spring of last year, 1847, some families of Koltchans came to one of the Kenai villages with the intention of going to the mission to be baptized, but were not able to go by boat. The Kenai who saw them said that, when they prayed, some of the Koltchans who had come to them burst into tears and said: "God has forsaken us and does not call us to Him. How shall we die, for there evil awaits the unbaptized!" The missionary was not able to visit these Koltchans and fulfill their pious wish, as he had also the charge of the Noushagin Mission which now, from the lack of men suitable to be missionaries, was dependent upon the Kenai missionary. Their former missionary, the priest Paitchelin, had been compelled to go the Kodiak church, on account of illness.

In the summer of 1846 a number of Koltchans and their families, 54 persons in all, came in boats to the redoubt at the upper part of the River Konskokvim, desiring to receive holy baptism. They received it at the hands of a layman, the person who was in charge of the redoubt, for the missionary was not and could not be there at that time, owing to his having so much other needful work. In the summer of 1847 these same newly-baptized persons again came to the redoubt to see the priest, and with them came also other Koltchans, about sixty in number, who also wished to be baptized. But for the same reason as before they were unable to see the priest, and were baptized by the layman already mentioned.

The selection from St. Innocent's letters published in Stourdza's *Remembrancer* makes no further mention of the Koltchans, but we may surely believe that they were not left to walk in darkness, "for God ever provideth teachers for those who would learn of Him, and maketh known the way of Truth to those who love the Truth."

The good bishop has little to say of *himself* in his letters. What he did, we must learn from others. He was not only, in his vast diocese, the chief of the missionaries, but the chief missionary, not only a spiritual governor, but a model of faithfulness and zeal. We are told that he became master of six dialects spoken in the field committed to his charge. He himself translated, and assisted others in translating, large parts of God's Word and the liturgy of the Church for the use of the natives. For forty-five years, ten of them as Bishop of Kamchatka, eighteen more as its archbishop, he labored on, in season and out of season.

Towards the close of 1867 God called to Himself one of the most remarkable prelates of modern days, Philaret of Moscow, who lived to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of his episcopate and then fell asleep. A few weeks after, I was in Moscow, where speculations were rife as to who could worthily follow such a man. When it was announced that Abp. Innocent of Kamchatka had been chosen to the vacant see, there was a general satisfaction.

It could not be said of him that nearly a half-century of toil and exposure had left his natural forces unabated. But, though he had passed the limit of three score years and ten, he entered upon his new duties with earnestness. He was assisted in the administration of his diocese by two efficient vicar bishops (one of whom, Leonid, has recently died, just after his promotion to the archiepiscopal see of Yaroslav). By no means did he leave all to them, but has been diligent in using his vast influence for the good of his whole Church.

He felt that the missionary work which had been so well carried on by individual zeal could be prosecuted more effectively by organized efforts. He knew, too, that the Church of Russia had need for her own sake to be heartily interested in the missionary cause, as has any Church on which God has laid the duty of laboring rather than of suffering for Him. And so he brought about the foundation of the Orthodox Missionary Society, in behalf of which he issued the following pastoral:

November 21st of this year, the approval of the Tsar was given to the Constitution of the Orthodox

Missionary Society, under the august patronage of Her Imperial Highness, the Empress Maria Alexandrovna. By virtue of this Constitution, the Council of the Society belongs to Moscow, and to me has been committed the duty of being its president. It has pleased God that here, in the center of Russia, in my declining years, I should still take part in missionary work to which, by the will of divine Providence, on the most distant borders of our country almost the whole of my life was dedicated from early youth.

The object of the Missionary Society is to aid Orthodox missions in the work of converting to the Orthodox Faith those not Christians, living within the borders of our country, and of building up those so converted in the truths of our holy religion, as well as in the practice of the duties of the Christian life. Of such persons we have as fellow-countrymen many millions untaught in the holy truths of the Faith, or needing to be built up in them. Compared with the number of these, our missions are very small, and what we have needs means to support and extend their work.

How holy a work this is, how very necessary for our Orthodox Church and Empire, must be self-evident to you. The true source of means for the development of this work must be found in the sympathy and zeal in its behalf of all Orthodox Christians. The Missionary Society is founded for all, rich and poor, who are ready to aid in this great work, which asks for and which needs them.

As your chief pastor and as the president of the Society, I ask and pray Christ-loving Moscow, with my people and clergy, not to leave me in this holy work without their sympathy and coöperation. In a short time, please God, I hope to meet my beloved flock, that together we may offer up to the Lord our prayers for His blessing upon the Orthodox Missionary Society, in the work it is undertaking, and may hold at Moscow the first public meeting of the Society.

INNOCENT, Metropolitan of Moscow,
President of the Orthodox Missionary Society

As we look back on the record of St. Innocent's labors, let us bless God for the good example of His

faithful servant, and pray Him to crown with His richest blessing the close of such a life.

The author cites a number of texts important to the development of the article from which this account is adapted:

Question Religieuse d'Orient et d'Occident, St. Petersburg, 1858, pp. 570, 16 mo.

Pamyatnik Trudov Pravoslavnych Blagoviestnikov (*Remembrancer of the Labors of Orthodox Russian Evangelizers*). A. S. Stourdza. Moscow, 1857, pp. 380, large 8vo.

Sbornik Svaidainie o Pravoslavnych Missiach, i Daitelnosti Pravoslavonavo Missionerskavo

Obschestva (*Collection of documents concerning Orthodox Missions, and the Transactions of the Orthodox Missionary Society*). Moscow, 1872, 2 vols. pp. 284, 484, 8vo.

Oustav Pravoslavnavo Missionerskavo Obschestva (*Constitution of the Orthodox Missionary Society*). St. Petersburg, 1869, 16 pp. 8vo.

Otchet Pravoslavnavo Missionerskavo Obschestva (*Report of the Orthodox Missionary Society*), for the years 1870, 1871, 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875. Moscow. 8vo.

Missioner, Edjenedalnoe Izdanie Pravoslavnavo Missionerskavo Obschestva (*The Missionary*, a weekly publication of the Orthodox Missionary Society). Moscow, 4to.

This article originally appeared in the American Church Review, vol. XXIX, 1877, was subsequently privately printed as a pamphlet. Some introductory materials of no significant interest to Orthodox Christians were omitted in the reprint issued by Eastern Orthodox Books and are likewise omitted here. In the interests of ease of reading, some minor stylistic editing has been undertaken for the present edition. As best possible, spellings of place-names have been conformed to modern usage (with apologies for the inevitable errors!).

He therefore who possesses the Holy Spirit is in the Church, which speaks in the tongues of all nations. Whosoever is outside this Church has not the Holy Spirit.... Attend to this, you who are members. A body is composed of many members, and one spirit gives life to all the members. By the human spirit, by which I myself am a man, I command my members to move, I direct the eye to see, the ears to hear, the tongue to speak, the hand to work, the feet to walk. The duties of each member are different, but one soul joins all together. Many things are commanded, many done, but one commands, one is obeyed. What our spirit, that is, our soul, is to our own members, this the Holy Spirit is to the members of Christ, to the Body of Christ, which is the Church. And so, where the Apostle speaks of it as a body, let us not think of it as a dead body without life. "One body" [Eph 4:4], he says. But, I ask you, is this a living body? It is living. By what does it live?

By one Spirit. And one Spirit. Be watchful, therefore, brethren, within your own body; and grieve for those who are cut off from the Church. As long as we live, while we are in our senses, let all members fulfil their duties among their own members. Should one member suffer anything, let all members suffer with it [I Cor 12:26]. Yet, though it may suffer, because it is in the body, it cannot die. For what does "to die" mean but to lose the spirit? Now if a member be cut off from the body, does the soul follow it? It can still be seen what member it is: it is a finger, a hand, an arm, an ear; besides substance, it has form, but it has no life. So it is with a man separated from the Church. Seek if he has the Sacrament. You learn he has. Look for baptism. You find it. The creed? You find it. This is the outward form; but unless inwardly you live by the Spirit, in vain do you glory in the outward form.

— St. Augustine of Hippo (†430 AD)

THE CZESTOCHOWA ICON OF THE ALL-PURE VIRGIN THEOTOKOS WHICH THE HOLY CHURCH COMMEMORATES ON THE 6TH OF MARCH

At Jasna Gora, near the city of Czestochowa, in the Province of Petrochowa, is the Roman Catholic Monastery of Czestochowa, in which the ancient wonder-working image of the all-holy Virgin, known as the Czestochowa Icon, is preserved.

It is the opinion of some that the holy Evangelist Luke painted as many as seventy icons of the Mother of God. We need not concern ourselves at this time with whether this opinion is correct or not. What is important for us is that tradition does indeed ascribe the painting of the Czestochowa Icon of the all-holy Virgin, which is celebrated on this day, to the holy Evangelist Luke. This tradition even points to Jerusalem as the site of the painting of this image, and more particularly to the Upper Room on Mount Sion, in which our Lord Jesus Christ celebrated the Mystical Supper on the eve of His sufferings and death on the Cross, and in which the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles.

In the years 66-67, when Roman forces under the command of Vespasian and Titus laid siege to Judæa, with the intent of completely annihilating the political independence of that land, the Christians, warned of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, withdrew in good time to the city of Pella, which lay in the midst of mountains. Thither they bore the Czestochowa Icon, which with other holy things they preserved in caves.

In the year 326, the holy Empress Helena arrived in Jerusalem from Constantinople to worship at the holy places. There she discovered the life-creating Cross of Christ, and there also she received the aforementioned icon of the all-pure Virgin as a gift from the faithful. She brought the image with her when she returned to the Imperial City and deposited it in the imperial chapel.

The icon remained in Constantinople for about five centuries. Having abode afterwards in Galicia, Bulgaria, Moravia and Czechia, it was ultimately brought to Russia by the Russian Prince Lev, famous as the founder of the city of L'vov. He deposited it in the Belz Castle, in the keeping of the Greek Orthodox clergy, where it became the source of many miracles.

Later, when southwestern Russia was subjected by the Poles, this wonderworking icon was acquired by Duke Wladyslaw Opolczyk, the leader of the Polish government. During the rule of this Wladyslaw, the Tartars invaded Russia and in due time laid siege to Belz Castle. Prince Wladyslaw then ordered the icon brought forth and set upon the city ramparts. While launching their arrows at the castle, the Tartars managed to hit the miraculous image of the Mother of God. Straightway, to the horror of all, blood flowed from the wound, traces of which are visible on the image even to this day. After this, a pestilential darkness covered the Tartars, from the effects of which a countless multitude of them began to die. Then, filled with terror, they were forced to lift the siege of the castle.

After the Tartar retreat, Prince Wladyslaw desired to move the miraculous icon of the Mother of God to Silesia as a place of greater safety, and to enshrine it in his fortress of Opole. All preparations for this transferal were completed, and the move was ready to begin, when Wladyslaw and his entourage were seized by a sudden, inexplicable fear. The duke fell to his knees and prayed earnestly before the image of the Queen of heaven, entreating enlightenment from on high. That very night he had a dream: he heard a voice sternly ordering him to bear the miraculous image from Belz Castle to Jasna Gora, near Czestochowa. At Jasna Gora, Prince Wladyslaw had a monastery built, and in 1382 transferred to it the miraculous icon of the Mother of God, placing it in the custody of the monks of the Catholic Order of St. Paul of Thebes (the Pauline Fathers), a community founded in Hungary in 1250, which later became affiliated with the Augustinians.

Some years later, the Czestochowa Monastery was attacked by the Hussites, followers of Jan Huss, professor of theology at Prague University, who was burnt alive at the stake in 1415. Having plundered all the monastery's treasures, the Hussites also tried to carry away the miraculous image of the Mother of God. They had already taken it from the church and placed it in a waiting cart, when they found that

the horses were unable to move from that place, some invisible force restraining them. In a frenzy, one of the Hussites seized the icon of the Mother of God and, enraged, cast it to the ground, while another thrust his sword into her face. But at that very instant divine retribution befell the sacrilegious blasphemers of holy things: the first straightway fell dead, and the arm of the other withered. Nor did the monastery's other plunderers escape the just wrath of God: death came suddenly to some of them, while others were struck blind.

Thus, though the monastery lost transitory possessions, it was consoled by the miraculous preservation of a treasure that cannot be taken away: the holy image of the Mother of God.

In the mid-17th century, when the Polish throne passed to Jan II Kazimierz, King Carl X Gustav of Sweden, the successor of Queen Christina, conquered Warsaw and Krakow, and soon brought almost all of Poland under his control. The first decisive defeat of the Swedish armies took place before the monastery at Jasna Gora, where the

Czestochowa Icon of the Mother of God is enshrined. This aid and assistance from the Queen of heaven encouraged the Poles, and they formed an alliance known as the Tyszowcz Confederation. Part of the military leadership and the armies united to give mutual aid against the Swedes. Returning from Silesia to L'vov, King Jan II Kazimierz issued a manifesto in which he entrusted his realm to the protection of the Mother of God, naming her the Queen of Poland. Thereafter, in 1656, Poles brought their war with the Swedes to a successful conclusion.

The miracles wrought through the Czestochowa Icon of the Mother of God are recorded in a special book kept in the Czestochowa Monastery. Many copies have been made of this icon, which are enshrined not only in Catholic churches, but in Orthodox temples as well.

*Translated from the Russian by the reader Isaac E. Lambertsen, from *The Mother of God*, by E. Poselyanin (Sankt-Petersbur: P. P. Soikin Book Publishers, n.d.), pp. 174-177. Copyright © 2010. All rights reserved.*

AKATHIST HYMN TO THE ALL-HOLY THEOTOKOS, IN HONOR OF HER ICON OF CZESTOCHOWA, ALSO KNOWN AS "INVINCIBLE VICTORY"

KONTAKION I

To the chosen leader, the savior of the Russian land,
let us offer hymnody of laudation. O Mother of the
King of heaven, deliver our land from every peril,
and free from all tribulations and misfortunes those
who cry aloud:

Rejoice, O earnest helper! Deliver us from all
evil and work thou the miracle of salvation!

Ikos I

In heaven the assembly of the angels doth hymn
thee constantly, O Mistress; and we who are born
of earth, having recourse to thy miraculous icon
which was painted by the holy Luke, cry out to thee
thus:

Rejoice, Mother of the never-waning Light;
rejoice, sacred habitation of the Holy Spirit!
Rejoice, bright knowledge of grace;

rejoice, jubilation of the angelic hosts!
Rejoice, bush that burnt without being
consumed;
rejoice, thou who dost gaze eternally upon the
Lord of hosts!
Rejoice, never-fading blossom of incorruption;
rejoice, image of the resurrection of Christ!
Rejoice, O earnest helper! Deliver us from all
evil and work thou the miracle of salvation!

KONTAKION II

Beholding the piety and faith of the holy Empress
Helena, who discovered the precious Cross of the
Lord in Jerusalem, O Mother of God, thou didst
present her with thine icon, which had been pre-
served by thy faithful servants from of old, that the
people might continually pray before it, chanting:
Alleluia!

IKOS II

Understanding this image to be a blessing from God for the Imperial City, the holy Empress Helena deposited it there in the cathedral church, where many received healing through it, chanting to the Mother of God such praises as these:

Rejoice, cup drawing forth joy everlasting;
rejoice, wellspring pouring forth ineffable
delight!
Rejoice, most beauteous abode of paradise;
rejoice, most glorious garden of Christ!
Rejoice, dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit;
rejoice, confounding of the enemies of the
righteousness of God!
Rejoice, thou who dost comfort us with spiri-
tual joy;
rejoice, thou who dost not disappoint those
who call upon thee with faith!
Rejoice, O earnest helper! Deliver us from all
evil and work thou the miracle of salvation!

KONTAKION III

During times of heresies, O Mother of God, the power of the Most High preserved thine icon from profanation, from destruction by the wicked iconoclasts, and from theft by barbarians, for thou thyself art the protectress of Christians, who sing to thy Son and God: Alleluia!

IKOS III

Possessing thy holy icon as a treasure, the holy Cyril and Methodius enlightened the lands of the Slavs with the holy Christian Faith, that the heathen might come to know the true God and glorify the Mother of God thus:

Rejoice, O our mighty edifier;
rejoice, omnipotent victor!
Rejoice, liberator of captives;
rejoice, protectress of the oppressed!
Rejoice, mediatrix for the whole world;
rejoice, thou who impartest life incorruptible!
Rejoice, deliverance from the worship of idols;
rejoice, our reconciliation with God!
Rejoice, O earnest helper! Deliver us from all
evil and work thou the miracle of salvation!

KONTAKION IV

In the tumultuous times of troubles and disorders, O all-holy Virgin, thine icon is the salvation of all who have recourse to it, and all have found protection and help in thee, crying out with thankful hearts: Alleluia!

IKOS IV

Beholding and hearing of the miracles made manifest through thine icon, O all-holy Theotokos, the princes of Russia cherished this holy object from generation to generation, praying before it with compunction:

Rejoice, incorrupt Mother of the Lamb and
Shepherd;
rejoice, all-blessed Virgin!
Rejoice, thou who showest us maternal love;
rejoice, thou who coverest all with thy precious
robe!
Rejoice, sure hope of eternal good things;
rejoice, O our earnest advocate!
Rejoice, plea before the Judge most just;
rejoice, forgiveness of all our sins!
Rejoice, O earnest helper! Deliver us from all
evil and work thou the miracle of salvation!

KONTAKION V

Making divine progress from city to city in western Rus', thine icon, O all-holy Theotokos, everywhere revealed thy glory and that of thy Son, Christ our God, unto those who chanted to Him: Alleluia!

IKOS V

Beholding the dread advance of the Moslem Tartars, the people of Belz bore thy miraculous icon upon the ramparts of their city, O all-holy Virgin, and with faith prayed to thee for help. And thou didst then hasten to their aid, that they might cry out to thee:

Rejoice, thou who pourest forth thy mercy
upon us;
rejoice, thou who movest the Master to pity!
Rejoice, thou who by thine icon preservest
from misfortunes;
rejoice, salvation of Orthodox Christians!

Rejoice, thou who hatest evil deeds;
 rejoice, thou who treatest us with loving-kindness!
 Rejoice, consolation of Russia;
 rejoice, sacred adornment of the Church of Christ!
 Rejoice, O earnest helper! Deliver us from all evil and work thou the miracle of salvation!

KONTAKION VI

Everywhere the people proclaimed thy wondrous aid: for when the infidel Tartars wounded with an arrow thine all-pure face depicted upon thine icon, suddenly darkness and gloom descended upon them, and they slew one another in their haste to flee. But the faithful, beholding this miracle, chanted praise unto the Lord: Alleluia!

IKOS VI

Grace shone forth and the darkness vanished, and the horn of the Christian people was lifted up, O Mother of God; for thou didst strengthen the Orthodox Faith by the signs and wonders made manifest through thy holy icon unto those who pray thus:

Rejoice, thou who most wondrously deliverest from foreign invasion;
 rejoice, thou who savest from captivity and slaughter!
 Rejoice, thou who wast pierced by a Moslem's arrow;
 rejoice, ineffable Mother and Virgin!
 Rejoice, thou who pourest forth streams of miracles upon those who entreat thee;
 rejoice, thou who transformest grief into joy!
 Rejoice, key to the kingdom of heaven;
 rejoice, thou who helpst us to lead an honorable life!
 Rejoice, O earnest helper! Deliver us from all evil and work thou the miracle of salvation!

KONTAKION VII

Desiring that thine icon remain in Czestochowa, thou didst render the cart transporting it immovable when certain malefactors sought to remove it from the city; and the Christians, discovering that

the theft of thine image had been prevented, cried out to God: Alleluia!

IKOS VII

A new miracle for the affrighting of the ungodly didst thou make manifest at that time through thine image, O all-pure one, striking with blindness and sudden death the blasphemers who had wounded thine icon with a sword and cut it into three pieces. And we, honoring this icon, cry out to thee:

Rejoice, O wounded Mother of God;
 rejoice, thou who wast chosen before the beginning of time!
 Rejoice, foremost guide to heaven;
 rejoice, thou who art higher in honor than all the angelic hosts!
 Rejoice, loving mother of all;
 rejoice, inexhaustible vessel of grace!
 Rejoice, thou who givest help unto those who ask;
 rejoice, thou who arrange the good life!
 Rejoice, O earnest helper! Deliver us from all evil and work thou the miracle of salvation!

KONTAKION VIII

Strange was it to the Swedish forces to behold how their hitherto invincible and dread army was suddenly routed near the city of Czestochowa, where the miraculous icon of the Mother of God was enshrined, before which the people did not cease to chant: Alleluia!

IKOS VIII

O all-holy Virgin, speedy helper of all who pray to thee and have recourse to thine icon, who now as of old dost help and preserve those who honor thee: accept from us these praises:

Rejoice, initiate of the mysteries of the ineffable Counsel;
 rejoice, treasury of the grace of God!
 Rejoice, vanquishing of foreign attacks;
 rejoice, salvation from death and destruction!
 Rejoice, Queen of heaven above and earth below;
 rejoice, bestower of all manner of good things!

Rejoice, deliverance from enemies and
misfortunes;
rejoice, astonishment of men!
Rejoice, O earnest helper! Deliver us from all
evil and work thou the miracle of salvation!

KONTAKION IX

Men and women of every age were gladdened when they beheld Tsar Peter of Russia chant hymnody of supplication before the icon of the Mother of God, mindful that this image was once a noble possession of Russian princes; and in their sight he praised the Lord and His Mother with the hymn: Alleluia!

IKOS IX

Covering all Christendom with the omophorion of thy mercy, and swiftly hastening to our aid, with the holy hierarch Nicholas, the favorite of God, thou dost mediate before God for us. Hearken now to the sound of our entreaties offered up before thine image:

Rejoice, thou who dost illumine us with the
light of the Truth;
rejoice, thou who dost stretch forth thy hands
for us in prayer!
Rejoice, thou who unitest God and man;
rejoice, thou who with immortality dost en-
lighten mortal nature!
Rejoice, delight of faithful souls;
rejoice, avoidance of soul-destroying deeds!
Rejoice, nurturer of pious Christians;
rejoice, good ruler of those who are humble of
mind!
Rejoice, O earnest helper! Deliver us from all
evil and work thou the miracle of salvation!

KONTAKION X

Desiring to save the human race from the darkness of unbelief and error, O Mother of God, thou didst reveal to the world the light of the Orthodox Faith, and the Russian army alone didst thou vouchsafe to capture the fortress wherein thy miraculous icon was enshrined, before which they chanted hymns of thanksgiving: Alleluia!

IKOS X

Thou art an unassailable rampart and a firm bulwark for the faithful Russian people who honor thee, O Mother of God; for, revealing thy good pleasure in the many copies made from the Icon of Czestochowa, thou dost grant what is asked, averting the wrath of God from those who sing to thee:

Rejoice, thou who didst set the Russian realm
in good order;
rejoice, thou who didst set all beneath the feet
of the Orthodox Tsar!
Rejoice, thou who dost refute spiritually pernicious teachings;
rejoice, thou who dost mercifully regard the
supplications of the humble!
Rejoice, consolation amid grief and misfortune;
rejoice, salvation from sudden death!
Rejoice, thou who givest victory to the faithful;
rejoice, thou who crownest with the wreath of
incorruption!
Rejoice, O earnest helper! Deliver us from all
evil and work thou the miracle of salvation!

KONTAKION XI

We chant hymns and offer praise unto thee, O all-holy Virgin, we pray before thine icon, whereon we behold the wounds inflicted by the hands of ungodly men and compounded by our iniquities, and we cry out to God, having thee as our Mediatrix: Alleluia!

IKOS XI

Thine icon, which was made manifest through light, shineth forth miracles even to this day, revealing thy mercy unto us; for many times the people tried to cover with all manner of pigments the wound on thine all-pure face which was painted on this icon, yet the artists labored in vain, for the wounds which we inflicted on thee by our sins and iniquities shone through again. Yet forgive us all, O Virgin, and have mercy upon those who cry:

Rejoice, mighty fortress of the Faith;
rejoice, beginning of the miracles of Christ!
Rejoice, opening of the gates of paradise;
rejoice, almighty revelation of the mystery of
God!

Rejoice, acceptable incense of prayer;
rejoice, holder of Him Who holdeth all things!
Rejoice, expunging of the sins of men;
rejoice, thou who dost establish us in the love of
God!

Rejoice, O earnest helper! Deliver us from all
evil and work thou the miracle of salvation!

KONTAKION XII

O all-holy Virgin, cover us with the grace that
proceedeth from thy wondrous icon, save us by
thine intercession, and have mercy upon the land of
Russia, wherein in years past thou didst shine forth
with many miracles; and reveal the wonder of
salvation unto us who pray before thine image and
chant unto thy Son and God: Alleluia!

Ikos XII

Singing hymnody of praise with our unworthy
mouths, we trust in the mercy of God and thy help
and mediation before the Lord for us sinners, O
Mother of God, that He grant victory over adver-
saries to the Russian realm, freedom from foreign
subjection, the restoration of the Orthodox Tsar,
and passage to the kingdom of heaven. And be thou
continually with us who cry to thee:

PRAYER TO THE MOTHER OF GOD

Recited before Her Miraculous Czestochowa Icon

O most merciful Lady, Queen and Theotokos, who
hast been chosen from all generations and art called
blessed by all in heaven and on earth! Look with
mercy upon these people, who stand before thy
holy icon, earnestly praying to thee, and by thine
aid and intercession before thy Son and our God
arrange that no one depart from this place with his
hopes disappointed, his trust put to shame; but let
each receive from thee all things according to the
good will of his heart, as he needeth and requireth
for salvation of soul and health of body. Moreover,
O loving Mother, overshadow and shield with thy
protection all our civil authorities: by thy supplica-
tions drive from them every enemy and adversary;
and make their life steadfast in peace and serenity,
that all of us may live a tranquil and undisturbed life
in all goodness, piety and purity. Lead them to the

Rejoice, thou who enlightenest all with Fire
divine;
rejoice, thou who dost dispel the gloom of sin!
Rejoice, thou who dost soften the hardness of
our hearts;
rejoice, thou who dost return the lost to the
path of salvation!
Rejoice, indestructible wall;
rejoice, invincible victory!
Rejoice, adornment of heaven and earth;
rejoice, our hope of resurrection!
Rejoice, O earnest helper! Deliver us from all
evil and work thou the miracle of salvation!

KONTAKION XIII

O most hymned Mother, who gavest birth to the
Word Who is holier than all the saints, look down
now upon thine earthly portion, and beseech the
Lord Almighty, that He not enter into judgment
with us, but that He grant remission of sins, libera-
tion from the yoke of the demons, and the restora-
tion of Holy Russia, unto us who cry out to God
with faith: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*The foregoing Kontakion is recited thrice, whereupon
Ikos I & Kontakion I are repeated.*

kingdom of Christ; and direct their paths and
counsels, that justice and great peace may shine
forth in our days, that their hearts and the hearts of
those they govern may rejoice, as the heart of the
father is gladdened by his children. Beseech God
Who is above the heavens, O kind-hearted Mis-
tress, that He ever keep His Holy Church,
strengthen our Orthodox hierarchs with His ex-
alted blessing, and preserve them for His Holy
Church whole, in health, honor, length of days, and
rightly dividing the word of His Truth; and merci-
fully deliver them and all Orthodox Christians
from all enemies, visible and invisible, steadfastly
and immutably preserving them in Orthodoxy and
a firm faith to the end of time. Look with kindliness
and the oversight of thy merciful aid, O most
hymned one, upon our land, its cities, this town

and holy temple, and pour forth upon them thy rich mercies; for thou art the omnipotent helper and aid of us all. Incline thine ear also to the entreaties of all thy servants who have recourse here to this, thy holy icon; and hearken to the sighs and groans wherewith thy servants pray in this holy church. And if foreigners or those of another faith come here to pray, hearken also, O solicitous Lady, and treating their charity as worthy of mercy, help them toward salvation. Those in our lands who are hard-hearted and stiff-necked do thou likewise guide to salvation. Those who have fallen away from the pious Faith do thou turn back and reckon again within the Holy Orthodox Catholic Church. Preserve and maintain peace among the families of all people and among our brethren, establish fraternity and humble-mindedness among the youth, support the elderly, instruct children, impart courage to men, assist widows and orphans, comfort and maintain those in straitened circumstances and those who find themselves beset by tribulations, feed infants, heal the sick, and free those held captive, continually protecting us and all who do us

good. By thy mighty intercession before the most Holy and life-creating Trinity, and that of God's holy and chosen favorites Cyril and Methodius, O good one, grant fertility to the land, seasonable weather, and all timely and goodly gifts that are profitable for us. Our fathers and mothers, brethren and sisters, and all who from ages past have fallen down before thy holy icon, do thou grant rest in the habitations of the saints, in a place of light, a place of verdure, a place of rest, where there is no grief and sighing. And when our time also will come to depart this life and pass into eternity, stand before us, O all-blessed Virgin, and grant a Christian ending to our life, devoid of fear and shame, and peaceful, accompanied by the partaking of the Holy Mysteries, that in the age to come all of us may be vouchsafed, with all the saints, endless and blessed life in the kingdom of thy beloved Son, our Lord and God Jesus Christ, to Whom is due glory, honor and dominion, with His unoriginate Father and His all-holy, good and life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Translated from the Church Slavonic by the
reader Isaac E. Lambertsen,

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THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

St. Philaret of New York

The feast of the Annunciation of the Mother of God is one of the most exquisite, bright, joyous and beautiful feasts. The Russian nation, which so loved the most pure and most blessed Virgin Mary that it even called the Russian land the house of the Mother of God, somehow particularly loved this feast and celebrated it in a special way. The Russian people said of the feast of the Annunciation of the Mother of God that on this day even the bird does not weave its nest and a maiden does not plait her braids; all of nature rejoices and triumphantly celebrates, and just as the sun dances at Pascha during sunrise, likewise it dances on the Annunciation.

When we read the only account in the Gospel, that of St. Luke the Evangelist, of how this most

glorious event of the Annunciation occurred, one must bear in mind that the evangelist mentioned only the most important aspects. One can hardly think that the holy archangel appeared and spoke only a few words; nevertheless, the main content of his good tidings was passed on to us in the Holy Gospel and already from this we see to what extent this day was joyous and great.

But the Church, her tradition and the holy fathers of the Church in their writings have left us certain details regarding this most sublime event. Specifically in the Holy Land, in Nazareth there is a spring which is called "the spring of the Mother of God". And so, the moving tradition has been preserved of the detail concerning the event of the Annunciation. According to the Gospel it

happened thus: The angel entered into a place, a certain building where the Mother of God was at the time, stood before her and greeted her “Rejoice, thou full of grace, the Lord is with thee!” But the tradition preserved by the holy fathers relates it in the following manner: The Virgin Mary, who was at the time still a very young maiden, had gone to this spring to draw water, just as all maidens and young women do. And it was there, by this spring, that she heard the voice: “Thou shalt bear My Son.” She alone heard this voice; this was not a shuddering thunder from the skies, yet it was clear Who had pronounced these words.

They were pronounced by Him, Whose Son would be born of her, that is, God the Father Himself. And although these words were spoken only for her, and she alone knew them, when creation hears the voice of its Creator, it trembles. Her pure, holy soul directly received the streams of divine grace; but here, when she heard the voice of her Creator and Master, her virginal and pure soul quivered. In trepidation and fear she returned home. But it was necessary to somehow calm the ruffled soul and so she busied herself with her favorite reading — the Holy Scriptures. But when she began to read, the book of Prophet Isaiah opened up to her where it happens to say that the Savior of the world would be born of a virgin. Yet so profound was her divine, her sweetly-fragrant humility, that despite those words which she had heard near the well, she nonetheless did not apply that prophesy to herself; but having read about the birth of the Savior of the world from a virgin, she simply thought “how happy I would be if I could only be the least servant of this most blessed virgin.” And at that point the Archangel Gabriel stands before her and she hears his words: “Rejoice O full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women.”

We know from her life that the appearance of the angel was not something new for her. Prior to her move to Nazareth, from her very move into the temple, she had also lived previously at the temple and, as Church tradition maintains, the Archangel Gabriel had appeared to her, bringing her food and conversing with her. Therefore, the appearance itself should not have particularly made her

nervous. But she hears an unusual salutation, which no virgin nor woman had ever heard before. Therefore the evangelist does not say that upon *seeing* him she became frightened, but that upon *hearing* his words she became embarrassed because of them and she began to contemplate what such a salutation could mean. And next she hears the archangel say to her: “Do not fear, Maria, for thou hast found grace with God; thou wilt bear a Son and give Him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the One Most High, and the Lord God will grant Him the throne of David His father, and His kingdom shall have no end.” Furthermore, the Church preserved for us again that moving tradition, according to which these words were far more extensive than briefly related in the Gospel, and apart from other things spoken, the holy archangel, seeing her nervousness, says to her: “Why dost thou fear me, why dost thou tremble before me, O Mistress, before whom I myself tremble; why dost thou stand so reverently before me, when I myself stand with reverent fear before thee....”

When the Virgin Mary heard the blessed tidings from the archangel, confusion immediately entered her most holy soul: The archangel was announcing the good news to her that she would be a mother, yet she had taken a vow of virginity and would never abandon that vow: how could this be, for a virgin cannot be a mother and a mother cannot be a virgin? And so she asks her humble question: “How will this be when I know not a husband?” But the archangel says to her: “The Holy Spirit will come over thee and the power of the Most High will overshadow thee,” and he ended his good news with the words “with God no word will be left powerless” — that is to say, no word or command given by God can be left unfulfilled. Her holy soul became calm and she understood, that this would be a *supernatural* birth and, having regained peace, she spoke those marvelous words which Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow called “the good announcement from earth to heaven.” Take note of the following: the archangel appeared to have accomplished his task. He had told her everything, explained everything to her, but he seems to be awaiting something; he does not leave. And finally

he hears her answer, of which the great hierarch says that if the good news of the angel was good tidings from heaven to earth, then her words were *good tidings from earth to heaven*. Her response was: “I am the handmaiden of the Lord — let it be to me according to thy words.” That is to say, a handmaiden of the Lord would be a servant who does not question. Her master deals with her as he wills and she merely submits and carries out his will — humble, complete obedience and total dedication to the will of God announced to her by the heavenly messenger....

And so this mutual exchange of messages has been completed, from heaven to earth and from earth to heaven and “the angel departed from her.” Her pure, wise, enlightened soul understood, of course, that this announcement would bring a fundamental change to her life. She probably had thought that she would finish the course of her life in obscurity, in dedication to God and service to Him. But here she sees that according to the lot being foretold, she would become the Queen of all queens; that she would be higher and more honorable than the cherubim and seraphim. Her emotional state is aflutter over all of this and, knowing from the angel of the most glorious event which occurred in the life of her oldest relative, the righteous Elizabeth, who had already lost hope of ever having a son or daughter, but now prepares also to be a mother, she rushed to visit her. And of course, it was a great joy for her, upon entering the dwelling place of the righteous Elizabeth, when she greeted her and then heard the words from her which in Nazareth the angel had used to greet her: “Blessed

art Thou among women.” What a joy this was for Her.... And at that moment, from her pure soul poured out that prayerful hymn which the Church loves so and always repeats at matins: “My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior....” Then she says: “for He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden;” in other words, the Lord had seen her humility. Then further on she expresses that which has now become clear to her. She now understood how lofty her lot was: “from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed;” “for the Mighty One hath done great things to me.”

And here she, a Judæan virgin, unknown to the world, is raised up through this announcement to such a height, to such stature, that in comparison all earthly stature is trivial.... But having said, “For the Mighty One hath done great things to me,” she adds: “and holy is His name.” Being truly devoted to God, even here she resorts to glorifying the holiness of God.

May all of this be edifying unto us all, and especially that humility of hers, on account of which she was unable to immediately receive the announcement that she would become the Mother of God; and that dedication, obedience and submission to God, which caused her to say that she is the handmaiden of the Lord, saying, may it be to her according to the words of the angel. She gave us a supreme and most holy example of how we must always, but particularly in responsible and important moments of one’s life, before all else be concerned that we fulfill God’s will, just as she herself fulfilled it on the day of her Annunciation.... Amen.

If a man is humble he never thinks that he has been treated worse than he deserves. He stands so low in his own estimation that no one, however hard he may try, can think more poorly of him than he thinks of himself. This is the whole secret of the matter.

— St. Theophan the Recluse

ON HUMILITY

St. Philaret of New York

The holy evangelists Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us of one accord that when the time of His sufferings was already at hand, our Lord Jesus Christ began to tell His apostles clearly what would happen to Him in the near future in Jerusalem; He spoke directly of the lot which awaited Him there, what sufferings He would endure there, of the shameful death He would die, and that then He would arise on the third day.

And since the evangelists tell us about this, then they also indicate to us that the apostles could not properly understand these predictions of the Savior. One of the evangelists even says this outright, that “this speech” (the words of the Savior) was hidden from them and they could not understand what this could mean, but did not resolve to ask Him. And one must say that, although the apostles loved their Teacher with their whole hearts, all their being — for this reason they had left everything (family, homes, and all they possessed), and followed Him — but despite this complete love for their Teacher, they could not fittingly understand His holy mission. In the Gospel we constantly read examples of how this was evident.

For instance, on one occasion the Lord asked His disciples: “But whom say ye that I am?” Apostle Peter answered on behalf of all: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” The Lord pronounced a blessing on him for this saying, “Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father Who is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter (a rock) and upon this rock I will build My Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her.”

A very short time lapsed, but it was specifically after this that the Lord began to directly indicate what was awaiting Him. And what happened? That same Apostle Peter, on whom the Lord had pronounced such a blessing, called Him off to the side (as the evangelist Matthew tells us) and began to contradict Him. The Lord is speaking of the sufferings and death which await Him, but meanwhile he says: “Have mercy upon Thyself; that this

should not be unto Thee!” And do you remember the response he received? The Lord Jesus Christ said to His preëminent apostle who was trying to persuade Him to have mercy on Himself: “Get thee behind Me, *satan*!; thou art an offense unto me: because thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men;” *i.e.*, you wish to put your own human realizations (even if out of love and pity) higher than God’s mission, for the sake of which the Son of God came to earth.

And now we have today’s Gospel reading. It speaks specifically of how the Lord began to explain to the apostles in detail what awaits Him in Jerusalem. And after this, two disciples approach Him, brothers by birth, the sons of Zebedee and, according to one evangelist, their mother Salome also participates, for she had approached together with them and began to implore on their behalf. They (and their mother) say: “Teacher, we wish Thee to grant that which we are about to ask.” “And what is it that you wish Me to grant you?” asked the Lord, of course knowing all things beforehand. “Grant, that one of us should sit at Thy right side and one at Thy left in Thy kingdom” — *i.e.*, so that we should occupy the first places beside Thee when Thou art glorified in Thy kingdom. And again here, the Lord Jesus Christ sees that which He already knew — to what degree His disciples did not understand Him. He is speaking to them of suffering and death, yet they are speaking to him of glory. Of course, ultimately the Lord would be glorified, but He would go to this glory through the Cross and suffering. The apostles did not understand that if the Lord would literally fulfill their request immediately, then they would have to occupy those two places on the crosses where the two thieves were crucified — one who was wise, and another, unfortunate unwise one — for the throne to which people had raised up the Son of Man was the Cross. But the Lord told them simply: “You know not what you ask.” And He asked them again: “Can you drink the cup which I drink, or be baptized with the baptism with which I am to be baptized?” The apostles, yet again demonstrating

that on one hand they did not quite understand these words, and on the other, showing what kind of love was ablaze in their souls, say without any hesitation: “We can,” — that is, we will follow Thee; we wish to receive that lot which Thou art receiving. This is how much they loved Him! And the Lord, without rebuking them as He had Apostle Peter, merely says: “Ye shall drink indeed of My cup and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with.” (But not yet. In time this will be.) But as far as the request they made, He answers directly: “But to sit on My right hand, and on My left is not Mine to give,” as the Lord said humbly — that is to say, “it does not depend on Me, as a man, but for whom it is prepared by My Father.” These words of the Savior signify that in His kingdom there will be the triumph of complete, most absolute truth, and that no personal requests or desires will have any place there, but according to the most pure and holy truth of God, every one will occupy that place in His kingdom which he deserves because of his life and labors.

The other apostles, of course, heard what James and John had requested. And, as the Gospel states, they became indignant. Every one of them had left everything and followed their Teacher, and they naturally thought: Why should these two place themselves higher than the others? In order to cut off the possibility of such discord and unpleasantness in the apostolic midst, the Lord called them unto Himself and said: “You know how it is in the world. Positions of esteem are occupied by those who govern people,” (who on a so-called human level of relations stand at the top). “But let it be not so among you,” says the Lord. “But whosoever wishes to be greatest among you, let him be least among you. And whosoever wishes to be chief among you, let him be your servant.” In other

words, the Lord established once and forever, not only for the apostles, but for all His followers, for all the children of His Church, a new principle: seniority in His Church is not given to the one who wants to be higher, but to the one who humbles himself, yielding the first, top places to others. There is only one superiority which the law of the love of Christ, the law of His Church knows. This is the superiority of humility. And the Lord, having said this, indicated His own most high and holy example — “As the Son of Man,” He said, “came not in order to be served, but to serve.”

Remember the most touching event at the Mystical Supper, when among the apostles, again a dispute arose regarding which of them was greater and which least. The Mystical Supper was about to begin. According to the rules of the day, the youngest among those present was to wash the feet of the rest. And so, none of the apostles wished to be deemed youngest. And among them an argument arose over which of them is the youngest. And we know what the Lord did. He threw off His outer garment, took a towel, girded Himself and began to wash the disciples’ feet — who, of course, grew silent from trepidation; all discussions and disputes ended when the divine Teacher Himself began to wash the feet of His disciples. And having done this, He said: “You call Me Lord and Teacher, and ye say well so, for so I am.” (I am your Lord and Teacher.) “And if I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, then you must also wash one another’s feet.” And in order that they not understand Him literally (and begin to literally imitate His gesture), the Lord clarifies that at that moment He is establishing a general principle: “I gave you an example.” (That is, I have given you an example) of how one must humble himself by not insisting on being superior to others, and in dealing with his neighbor, learning to yield.

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THE SCRIPTURAL BASIS OF THE ORTHODOX FAITH

His Grace Anatolis, Bishop of Mohilew and Mstislaw

“If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater.” [I John 5:9]

“Without faith,” dear brethren, “it is impossible to please God.” Thus teaches the inspired apostle St. Paul, “for he who cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” [Heb. 11:6]. “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God” [I Cor 2:11]. God, in his infinite goodness, has revealed to His Church such a knowledge concerning Himself, that human reason, in its own strength, and by its own exertions, is unable to attain to an equal knowledge. But if God has revealed Himself to us, then we can make no more blessed use of our reason than to subject it to the belief in the divine revelation, to believe the Word of God; for if reason cannot but sanction a belief in human testimony, then without all doubt the divine testimony merits from us a greater belief. “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater,” says St. John [I Jn 5: 9], and the truth of His revelation God in His own time confirmed by supernatural signs of His omnipotence — by wonders and prophecies.

In accordance then with the divine revelation and with the teaching of the Church, we believe in one God [Deut. 6:4; I Tim. 1:17] in three Persons, Who in the Holy Scriptures are called God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit [Matt. 28:19]. God the Father was not born, and does not proceed from another person; God the Son was born before all eternity; God the Holy Spirit proceeds before all eternity, from the only God the Father; but these three Persons of the most Holy Trinity are of perfectly equal divine dignity. This triune, self-existing [Ex. 3:14], eternal [Is. 41:4; Ps. 90:22], infinite [Luke 50:33; Ps. 102:28], omnipresent [Jer. 23:24], all-wise [Rom. 11:33], omniscient [I John 3:20], all-good [Ps. 145:9], all-just [Ps. 114:17], all-holy [I Sam. 2:2], and omnipotent [Ps. 115:3] God, in the beginning of time, called by his omnipotent Word the visible and invisible world [Gen. 1:1] into being from nothing;

that is, first God created the blessed realm of his own glory, when He gave to the purest spirits of angels their being [Job 38:6-7]. In the beginning all the angels were good and holy. Some of them, immovable in holiness, in love, and in striving after good, constantly praise God [Ps. 103:20], and fulfill his counsels respecting nations, countries, and [Is. 6:3] churches; and even every single believer receives through the blessing of God in baptism a guardian angel [Matt. 18:10]. These angels, however, are of assistance in the attainment of salvation only to those whose own will it is to inherit eternal life [Heb. 1:14; John 1:12; Ps. 34:8]. Other angels have not remained steadfast in goodness, but have sinned before God [Jude 6] and, having remained forever in wickedness, have become the eternal enemies of God and man who endeavor, with all kinds of temptation, to bring men under the yoke of sin [II Thess. 2:9-10], in order to plunge us into the same misery as that to which they are themselves subjected [Matt. 12:43, 25:41; II Pet. 2:4]; wherefore they are called devils [John 8:44]. After the creation of the spirits, the triune God created in six days out of nothing, by His sole word, “Let it be!” the visible world, *i.e.* the habitable earth, the surrounding firmament, besides all the lights of heaven, all that fills the earth, the worlds, and the air; and finally, the first man [Gen. 1:3-28], from whom is descended the whole human race [Acts 17:26].

God first formed from earth the body of the first man, Adam, breathed into him an immortal soul [Gen. 2:7], and formed out of his rib a companion [Gen. 2:22] during a deep sleep, into which God had caused him to fall. The first man, since, through the grace of God, he was innocent and free from sin [Eccl. 7:30], resembled not only the angels of God, but had in himself even the *image* of God [Gen. 1:27], which immediately at his creation was granted him, *i.e.* he possessed clear and perfect wisdom [Gen. 2:20, 23], his will striving only after goodness [Eph. 4:24], so that in his heart, true

righteousness and holiness burned with pure love for God alone; therefore the conscience of the first man was calm and peaceful. In such a state our first parents held complete dominion over all the creatures surrounding them [Gen. 1:26], and even the abode of our first father, called Eden [Gen. 2:8], was a place of unspeakable bliss and purest joys. Had our first parents continued in the state of innocence, and had they kept the commandment given them by God, they would have remained blissful, not only themselves, but they would also have transmitted their immortality and bliss to their posterity — the whole human race.

But the original innocence and felicity of our first parents ceased as soon as, having been seduced by the evil spirit which had entered into the serpent, they had eaten of the fruit of the tree forbidden by God [Gen. 2:16, 17]. By their transgression of the divine commandment, they plunged themselves and the whole human race into the saddest and most miserable condition [Rom. 5:14]. Since that time we are begotten from sinful seed, conceived in sin [Ps. 51:7]; all the inclinations of the heart draw man to evil from early childhood [Gen. 6:5]. Evil thoughts and desires are constantly arising in his reason and mind [Rom. 7:18]; each human being feels in himself an overbalance of sinful emotions above good and blissful wishes [Rom. 7:19]; all men have become objects of the anger of divine justice [Eph. 2:3]; the whole human race has come to resemble the leper who is not able to help himself by his own strength. None among men, even among the just, could discover any remedy to satisfy the divine justice for the sins of the human race; for also the just feared the divine judgment, since they felt in themselves the power of sin [I John 1:8]; no angel, however exalted in nature, was able to restore man to his pristine condition, to open to him anew the ways to eternal salvation, for creative power was thereto necessary [Eph. 2:10]; no created spirit ventured to take upon itself the mediation of reconciling man to God, because the offended God — an infinite being — needed an infinite satisfaction — a sacrifice of inestimable worth [Heb. vii. 23, 24].

But God, foreseeing from all eternity the miserable condition of mankind, caused by the fall of

our first parents, had predetermined, moved by his goodness and love, to give us again eternal felicity [Eph. 1:4]. To this end, it pleased our heavenly Father, before the creation of the world, that man should again be placed in a condition, in which it would be possible for him to attain eternal happiness [John 3:6]. The only Son of God willed to become man [Ps. 40:7-8], in order to satisfy the justice of God for the sins of mankind, and to offer men the means of their redemption [Heb. 10:7-10]; at the time it pleased the Holy Spirit to come to us, to sanctify and renew us [Tit. 3:5]. But in order that it might be known to men, if only in part, what great benefits the mercy of God has designed for the human race, the Holy Spirit has revealed in the Sacred Scriptures, and we believe, that the second Person in the Holy Trinity, Who redeemed us from sin and eternal death, is the only Son of God [John 1:18], the Wisdom [Prov. 8:22] and the Word of the Heavenly Father [John 1:1]. He was begotten of God the Father before all eternity, in an inconceivable manner without passions; true God [I John 5:20] from the true God, being of one essence in the Godhead with the Father [John 10:30], by Whom every thing has been created [John 1:3]. As of the light that is seen in the sun, that Light is born, which being of one and the same nature with the first, is seen in the whole world.

From the beginning of the world thus had been predicted by God, step by step in several and manifold ways, the advent of the Son of God in the flesh into the world [Gen. 3:15, 12:3, 26:4]; and not only was foretold by the prophets the time of His appearing [Gen. 49:10; Dan. 9:24-27], but also the signs had been stated by which He was to be known [Is. 7:14, 11:1-2, 53:4-12; Micah 5:2; Zach. 9:9; Ps. 2:2]. Finally, in the fullness of the time, these predictions, prophecies, and descriptions of His appearing were realized; and we believe that the only Son of God, through the agency of the most Holy Spirit, descended into the body of the most holy Virgin Mary [Luke 1:35], took flesh from her purest blood [John 1:14], perfectly like ours, sin excepted, and in taking a human soul [John 10:17-18; Acts 2:27, 31], became true man [I Tim. 2:5], without ceasing to be true God [Rom. 9:5]; so that He is God-man, called on earth Jesus

Christ, in Whose person two natures, the divine and the human, are united, unmixed, unchanged, undivided, and inseparable [dogmatic pronouncement of the Fourth Ecumenical Council of the Church]. Therefore is the ever-virgin Mother of Jesus Christ the true bringer-forth of God [Is. 7:14; Luke 1:43], without all comparison, more worthy of praise than the cherubim, and more glorious than the seraphim. At the same time we believe that our Lord and God Jesus Christ, after He had taken human nature and human weakness, although proving his divinity by miracles, which before His coming had been unheard of [Matt. 8:3, 13, 9:22, 12:13, 14:19, 25; Luke 17:14; John 5:8, 9:43], yet became poor for our sake [II Cor. 8:9], suffered in the course of His life many dangers [Matt. 2:13; Luke 4:29], denials, and troubles [Mark 11:12; Luke 9:58], calumniations, humiliation, and persecutions; that finally, after He had illuminated us with the light of the true knowledge of God [John 1:18], and had revealed to us the will of the heavenly Father [John 6:40], having been betrayed by His disciple for the satisfaction of the sins of the human race [I Tim. 2:6; John 1:29], He suffered revilings, disgrace, and the torture of the Cross; died and was buried under Pontius Pilate [Matt. 26:47-75, ch. 27]. His body being in the grave, our Savior's soul descended into hell, to liberate thence the souls of those who, from the beginning of the world, awaited his appearing [I Peter 3:18-20; Eph. 4:8-9], but on the third day after His burial, He rose from the grave by the power of His divinity.

After the resurrection He appeared frequently throughout forty days to His disciples, in order to instruct them continually in the secrets of His divine kingdom [Acts 1:3]. The work of redemption being completed, our Lord Jesus Christ ascended in His flesh to heaven, before the eyes of His disciples [Acts 1:9], and is now sitting at the right hand of God [Mark 16:19], *i.e.*, He received also in his humanity all power in heaven and on earth [Matt. 28:18], for the promoting of the kingdom of grace, or the holy Church instituted by Him [I Cor. 15:25]. Directing for this purpose all the changes arising in the world, the Savior defends His Church by His providence from all secret and open calumny, malice, and persecutions of the enemy, so

that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her [Matt. 16:18]; but for the continual edification of the Church, in which according to His promise He is always present by grace [Matt. 28:20], He institutes by the Holy Spirit her priests and teachers [Eph. 4:11-12], and directs and guides them by the same [John 16:13], to use the Word of His truth aright; wherefore the Church can never apostatize from the faith, or lack in the truth, or fall into error. Thus, trusting in the doctrine of the holy apostles, we acknowledge that our Lord Jesus Christ is the only chief Shepherd [I Pet. 5:4], the only mediator between God and man [I Tim. 2:5], the only High Priest separate from among sinners [Heb. 7:26], the only Head of His Body — the holy Church [Eph. 1:22-23], the only King of this His kingdom of grace [Luke 1:33; I Cor. 15:25]; for the Church is exclusively the kingdom of God on earth [Mark 1:15; I Pet. 2:9], and Jesus Christ is God, who will not give His glory to another [Is. 42:8]. Christ's kingdom of grace shall continue to the end of the world [I Cor. 15:25]. When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him [Matt. 25:31], to judge the quick and the dead [John 5:29]; then shall follow the kingdom of glory and felicity, of which there shall be no end [Luke 1:33].

We also believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who before all eternity, in an inconceivable manner, proceeds from the same God the Father [John 15:26]; and we acknowledge, moreover, at the same time, that according to this procession, the Holy Spirit is true God [Acts. 5:3-4], from the true God [I Cor. 3:17; II Cor. 6:16], of one substance with God the Father and God the Son [I Cor. 2:11; Matt. 10:20; Gal. 4:6]; to be adored and praised together with the Father and the Son [Matt. 28:19]; that the Holy Spirit spoke by the prophets and the apostles [II Pet. 1:20-21], that through the mediation [John 14:16] and for the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ He guides us in the way of repentance [Ps. 39:11, through the secret working of His grace, awakens in us groanings of prayer [Rom. 8:26], begins in us every good action, and coöperates with us in completing the same [Phil. 2:13], cleanses us from sin, and sanctifies us through the means of the mysteries or sacraments of

the Holy Church [Tit. 3:5-6], and impresses upon our heart the pledge of the spirit of adoption [Rom. 8:15], and leads every true believer to salvation.

We believe, moreover, in one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church; acknowledge that she is therefore one, because true believers in Christ, in whatever times or regions they live, form one spiritual body [Eph. 4:4-6], which as the Body of Christ [Col. 1:24], has one head Christ the Savior [Eph. 1:22], and is animated by one Spirit of God. We believe that the Church is holy because, sanctified through the doctrine, through the sufferings and the blood of Jesus Christ [Eph. 5:25-27], she is yet continually sanctified by the prayers and the gracious mysteries of the New Testament. We acknowledge that the Church is Catholic or universal, because she is not limited to any place, to any time, or to any people [Col. 1:5-6, 3:11], but comprehends the true believers of all places, of all times and nations [Gal. 3:9]. We call the Church Apostolic and Orthodox for the reason that, although as the building of God, she can have no other foundation than Jesus Christ [I Cor. 3:10-11], she yet is built upon the doctrine of all the apostles, which doctrine the Church also holds unchangeable, in the sense and understanding of the apostles and prophets [Eph. 2:19-21], since in this way she preserves uninterruptedly from the apostles the succession of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, by means of the ordination of her priests and teachers by the imposition of hands [Acts 13:1-4]. At the same time, we acknowledge it the duty of our conscience to follow the doctrine, the ordinances, the statutes, and the guidance of the holy Church, because our Savior in reference to the shepherds of the Church said: "He who heareth you, heareth me, and he who despiseth you, despiseth me" [Luke 10:16], and because whoever shall neglect to hear the Church, shall be as a heathen and a publican [Matt. 18:17].

Finally we invoke in our needs and in our repentance the saints whose lives have been well pleasing to God, because standing on a higher grade of nearness to Him, they beautify, strengthen, and bring to God by their intercession the prayers of the faithful [Rev. 8:3-4].

We surrender to the mercy of God the souls of

those departed in the faith who have failed to do worthy repentance [II Macc. 12:43], hoping that the prayers that are offered for them may help them in securing a blessed resurrection, especially when they are connected with the offering of the bloodless sacrifice of the Body of Christ, as well as the charities which are brought trustingly in their memory [John 14:13].

We acknowledge, moreover, and receive the New Testament mysteries [or sacraments] of the holy Church, inasmuch as we believe that in holy baptism we are born of the Holy Spirit to a spiritual and holy life [John 3:5], and are become partakers of the evangelical grace [Mark 16:16], and we acknowledge only one baptism [Eph. 4:5] because a man is born only once, either naturally or spiritually. In the anointing of myrrh [or chrismation] we receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which prosper and strengthen us in the spiritual life [II Cor. 1:21-22]. In the Holy Supper of the Lord we receive, under the form of bread and wine, the real Body and the real Blood of Christ unto eternal life [John 6:58]. In confession, while the priest declares the forgiveness of the sins that have been confessed to him, we are freed from them invisibly by Jesus Christ Himself [Matt. 18:18]. In the ordination of priests, the Holy Spirit installs, by the imposition of episcopal hands, regularly chosen men for the administration of the mysteries of Christ, and the feeding of his flock [Acts 20:28]. In marriage, the matrimonial union between the bridegroom and the bride receives a higher blessing [Eph. 5:31-32], and God is invoked in behalf of them, for the grace of pure harmony in the blessed production and the Christian education of children; in the last unction, the sick receive, by anointing the body with the holy oil, healing of the infirmities of the soul, as well as of the body [Jas. 5:14-15].

Lastly, in the belief in Jesus Christ, we expect the resurrection of the dead, which shall take place at the time appointed in the counsels of God — through His omnipotence, at the end of this visible world, in which the bodies of the departed, united with their souls, shall arise and become spiritual, incorruptible, and imperishable [I Cor. 15:53-54], and shall appear before the tribunal of Christ [Matt. 25:32], at which every one shall receive the things

done in his body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad [II Cor. 5:10].

And we hope that, for the faithful who love God and do good, there shall follow thereupon such a blissful life [Matt. 13:43], as we are not able to imagine [I Cor. 15:49]; but that the unbelieving and impenitent sinners shall be cast into eternal fire, and given up to eternal pain [Matt. 25:41-42].

Thus, dear brethren, the eternal truth itself, Christ our Savior has taught us. This belief we have received from the holy apostles; such and no other doctrine our predecessors have held, and the

general and local councils and the teachers of the Church have confirmed; our Orthodox, Catholic Church follows this doctrine; for this faith the martyrs spilled their blood and preferred death to the present life.

Therefore, whoever abides firm and immovable in this Faith even until death, testifying his belief by good works, so that neither tribulation, nor distress, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword shall separate him from the love of God [Rom. 8:35], the same shall without all doubt attain eternal salvation! Amen.

Translated by Nicholas Bjerring
Original edition 1873, reprinted by Eastern Orthodox Books 1974

ON FASTING

There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. [Mark 7:15]

This and similar passages — for example, But meat commendeth us not unto God [I Cor. 8:8] — are usually cited by those who do not like to fast, supposing that they thereby sufficiently justify the fact that they do not fast according to the rule and custom of the Church.

Everyone who is faithful to the Church knows how invalid this excuse is. Fasting decrees that we abstain from some foods not because they are defiled, but because we can more conveniently refine our flesh by this abstinence — something crucial for inner progress. This meaning of the law of fasting is so essential that those who consider some foods to be defiled are numbered among the heretics.

For those who are not well-disposed to fasting it is better not to insist on this point, but on the point that fasting is not obligatory, although it is definitely the means for overcoming sinful urges and the strivings of the flesh. There is no way that they can resist on this point.

If inner progress is obligatory, then the means by which it is obtained is also obligatory, that is, fasting. Each person's conscience says this to him.

In order to soothe their consciences, they assert: I'll compensate for my omission of fasting in another

way; or, fasting is harmful for me; or, I'll fast when I want to, but not during the established fasts.

However, the first excuse is inappropriate because no one has yet managed to cope with his flesh or to order his inner life properly without fasting.

The last excuse is also inappropriate, because the Church is one body, and to separate oneself from others within it means opposing its good order. One can remove oneself from the general customs of the Church only by leaving it; but, while someone is a member of it, he cannot say this or demand that.

The second excuse has a shade of validity. Indeed, among the limitations of fasting, the obligation is lifted from those upon whom fasting acts destructively, because the fast was established not to kill the body, but to mortify the passions.

But if one were to conscientiously count the true number of such people, it would be seen that they are so few that they do not even count.

Only one real reason remains — lack of desire. There is no point in arguing with this. You will not be brought to paradise against your will.

From: St. Theophan the Recluse, Thoughts for Each Day of the Year According to the Daily Church Readings from the Word of God (Moscow/Platina, CA: Sretensky Monastery/St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2010), pp. 196-197.

This slim book is a useful read. It is meant as an introduction for teens and young adults, such as ourselves, to the Orthodox Faith and life. *The Ark of Salvation* was written with the help of young parishioners, and much of it is composed of answers to the questions of these people. As such, although we have read many books and Orthodox periodicals, we have found it to be very helpful and instructive. First, it tells briefly about the Faith: what we believe (the Creed), icons, the liturgy, etc. The book then speaks of the life that we should be living with regard to obedience, music, family life, TV, computer games, etc. In this section it treats many subjects, some of them very touchy, which concern our age group. Many questions are answered beautifully, especially the question of whether or not wives should obey their husbands (and what the husbands' responsibilities are toward their wives). Another section speaks of finding a good husband or wife. Evolution, the relationship between science and Orthodoxy, and other topics are also discussed.

As Hieromonk Patapios (St. Gregory Palamas Monastery, Etna, California, Synod in Resistance) says in his review of the book, it fills a gap in available literature. There has been literature for children and literature for adults, but now there is literature for those who are in between. Some of the information given we found very familiar, but other information, like that in the second part, we had not come across before.

As this book was written for youth (teens and young adults) who are not always able to comprehend the most complex language, it uses simpler language that is easy for us to understand. Now, since the book is written by English for English, it requires close attention from the U.S. reader. The English are, in relation to us, a very laid-back people; they tend to understate things. The abbot

of the monastery is the epitome of English-ness. Often things are not said outright. They are subtly said or implied, or said in such a way as to make one think about it and come up with the right conclusion. Our everyday language seems strong to them. Since many teens are rather "hard-headed", this may be difficult for a U.S. reader to adjust to. In addition, some of their terms, like NHS (their national health system) will not be familiar to us. Another difference is found in the recipe for kolyva. This recipe measures amounts of ingredients by mass, not volume, as is done in the United States. Also, since the parish follows the Greek Typicon, the explanation of the liturgy follows the Greek practice. The Lamb, for example, is one large loaf, rather than the five small loaves used by the Russian Orthodox Church in the United States and elsewhere.

We agree with Hieromonk Patapios when he says that he hopes that a future edition will include information concerning the danger of movies (and images) as well as information on proper dress. We also think that monasticism ought to be treated in this book. If the reader of this article has not already done so, he might read Hieromonk Patapios' review of the book (*Orthodox Tradition*, Vol 28, No 2, 2011; St Gregory Palamas Monastery, Etna, CA; <www.synodinresistance.org>). The fathers of Saint Edward's have been kind enough to post sample pages on their website:

www.saintedwardbrotherhood.org.

As mentioned above, *The Ark of Salvation* is a very good book that answers many questions. We are glad to see it written and we are sure that all who make use of it will receive great benefit therefrom. We hope that many will avail themselves of this opportunity to gain much needed, and interesting, instruction.

Two young parishioners

Published by the Saint Edward Brotherhood, Brookwood, England, 2010,
available from SJKP Bookservice.
